



EXHIBIT 5
DATE 01-17-2011
HB 221

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HB 221 TALKING POINTS FOR 1/17/2010

State funding assistance, through Montana Food Bank Network (MFBN) is needed and appreciated so that local food banks and pantries can access good, nutritious food for families and individuals in need of help - and, sadly, there are many in our state that need help.

- In Calendar Year 2010, Helena Food Share distributed over 1,300,000 (1,310,353) pounds of food to local families and individuals in need. It is important to remember that we can only assist those who ask for help by coming in or calling. We continue to learn of those in need who we do not currently reach - transportation and distance from available food are the primary challenges!!
- We were asked to help 35,925 times - that is the number of visits made to our combined pantries (Helena, East Helena, Mobile) in Calendar Year 2010.
- 12,999 of these visits were for our Monthly Grocery program; You can only access this program once monthly; state assistance is used to help fill these specific requests for a 9-meal box of groceries.
- 50% of the children in Lewis & Clark County who are 5 years of age or younger qualify for WIC; in households served by Helena Food Share through the Monthly Grocery program in December 2010, 869 individuals were under the age of 18. Clearly, the number of children in need of food assistance is staggeringly high.
- Helena Food Share is currently doing everything we can to reach out to the growing number of households in need: we offer Food Stamp Outreach weekly; we have 11 different distribution programs to take advantage of federal dollars and reach those most in need (low income children and seniors); volunteer labor does the majority of the work - in 2010 884 volunteers gave a total of 16,756 hours - a savings to the community of \$123,157 at current minimum wage; we are active in group purchasing efforts with MFBN and sister agencies at the major food banks and pantries in Montana. We need the state to join our local community to continue meeting our neighbors' needs. No one should go hungry - ever.
- In 2010, the State of Montana provided over 39,000 (39,141 #) pounds of food through to Helena Food Share through the Food Aid to Montana program. This represents 3% of the total food distributed through all programs; 7% of the food distributed through the critical Monthly Grocery program.
- Helena Food Share receives approximately 94% of its funding directly from local individuals, businesses, churches, and local family trusts. These local individuals are our source of support for food assistance. It is to these local sources that we must go should we need to purchase more food to meet the needs of those requesting help. Can they do more?
- We have served a 12% increase in Monthly Grocery requests when we compare 4th quarter 2009 with 4th quarter 2010. In 2010, we served close to 900 (861) new households who had never requested food assistance before from Helena Food Share. Please do not cut back any current help given to local community effort to feed our families in need. We need your help to serve our children, our seniors, and our families in need.